

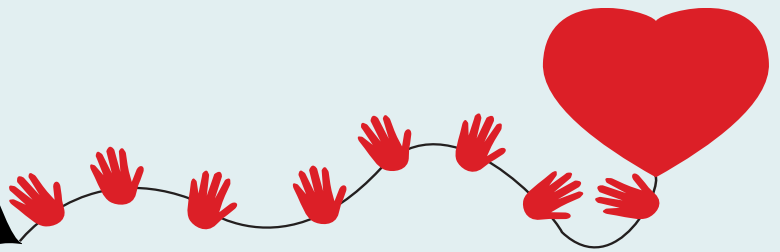


Maricopa County CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocate Program Newsletter

www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov

October 2003



CPS forum recap, new Children's Visitation Center hours, and more

In three separate forums, Arizona citizens told Governor Napolitano and the new Director of the Department of Economic Security, David Berns, what they thought should be done to improve Child Protective Services (CPS). I attended the forum held August 14 in Phoenix. There were about 200 people in the audience, including foster parents, CPS caseworkers, CASAs, health care workers and other child advocates. The Governor and Berns spoke briefly, then turned the floor over to the public. Throughout the forum, they listened intently and took notes. Nurses reported on drug-addicted babies turned over to drug-addicted parents, Bev Ogden of the Arizona Family and Child Advocacy Center urged the Governor to fund advocacy centers, where victims of abuse can receive medical exams, counseling and interviews with police and prosecutors in a child-friendly setting. Several foster parents and parents who have had their children taken away told their personal stories.

Children's Action Alliance leader Carol Kamin, who has been fighting for children for decades, was one of the more eloquent speakers. She drew applause from the audience when she urged the Governor to make improving pay and training for CPS caseworkers her top priority. She also weighed in on one of the most controversial recommendations from Governor's Advisory Commission on CPS Reform: the issue of whether to separate CPS from DES and make it a separate department. She said, although she understood the rationale for a split, she thought it would divert time and resources from resolving the underlying issues.

I did not speak, but I did submit written comments. One recommendation I made that was not addressed by the Advisory Commission was the lack of continuity in case management. CPS maintains that they need specialists in

It's picnic time

It's that time of year again when we start planning for our CASA picnic! We will hold our annual picnic, sponsored by the Thetas, at 12 p.m. Nov. 15, in Margaret T. Hance Park.

This event grows bigger and bigger every year! Last year, the Thetas set up games and activities in a carnival setting. The children enjoyed a cake walk, face painting and an inflatable play center. CASA staff cook the hot dogs and hamburgers for all to enjoy. There is always plenty of food. Come and have fun with us!

intake, ongoing case management, adoption, young adult, etc., but this means constant turnover in case workers, which delays permanency and is upsetting to the children and families. I recommended that CPS have a "gatekeeper" case manager, who, like the family physician, stayed with the child while in CPS custody and brought in other experts as needed for special services. I felt encouraged that the Governor was making abused and neglected children a priority and was listening to all sides in the debate.

— By Barbara Bean

Visitation Center, New Hours

The Arizonans for Children Visitation Center has new hours. They will now be open six days a week. Hours are 2 p.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday and 1 p.m.-6 p.m. Saturday. As always, the Visitation Center is open for CASAs and their kids, sibling visits and supervised parental visits. The facility is great for birthday parties and special meetings as well. You need to call 480-838-0085 to reserve a time for your visit. The Center is located at 402 W. Monroe in Phoenix. Check it out and see what a great place it is!

Report sheets and disks

The CASA office wants to thank you for getting your court reports to the office in a timely fashion. In addition, we are very appreciative of CASAs who complete the report distribution sheet fully; this allows the support staff to take less time to research the legal parties on the case and complete a form themselves. Great work!

It is also appreciated when you send in your report on a disk. Sometimes the disks received have been damaged due to mail processing. Please use padding or bubble-wrap envelopes to mail the disk to us. Thank you again!

DES Semi-Annual Report

Twice yearly, the Department of Economic Security, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, must complete a report to the Legislature addressing their activities. The last six-month report has been completed. The reports contain myriad statistics and a narrative on how the agency is fulfilling its function, addressing its compliance with statutory requirements. The report is available on the DES Web site at www.de.state.az.us. Take a look and see how the department is doing ... good for CASAs to know!

Thank You to Thetas!

The Kappa Alpha Theta fraternity alumnae chapter came through in a big way for our CASA kids! Wonderful backpacks stuffed with school goodies were presented to the CASA program in September.

The backpacks were stuffed with love, and Theta Service Chair Stacey Paullin was all smiles as she told us how much fun the members had in filling the packs. They filled a special need for our CASA children. Last month, they hosted an ice cream social at Tempe Town Lake with 100 percent of the proceeds donated to CASA. Thank you to the Thetas for supporting the CASA program!

Upcoming Events

Oct. 9, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

East Valley Crisis Center Tour
Mesa Location

Oct. 9, 6 p.m.-9 p.m.

Case Selection Training
Durango – Room 223

Oct. 13

CASA Office Closed
Columbus Day

Oct. 18, 8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.

Annual CASA Training Day
AZ Supreme Court Building
1501 W. Jefferson

Oct. 28, 5:30 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Independent Living/YAP Training
Durango – Room 223

Nov. 3, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

SW Behavioral Health Services Training
Durango – Room 223

Nov. 15, 12 p.m.- 2 p.m.

Annual CASA/Theta picnic
Margaret T. Hance Park
1134 N. Central Ave.

Please call the CASA Office for locations and to RSVP for all events.

CASA Contacts

Durango

3125 West Durango
Phoenix, AZ 85009
FAX - 602.506.5512

Leslie Blakley	602.506.4082
Otis R. Evans	602.506.4425
Rita Laird	602.506.4083
Laurie Laughlin	602.506.3934
Bonnie Lodato	602.506.6491
Bonnie Marcus	602.506.5221
La Donna Benner	602.506.3930
Delaine Davis	602.506.4415

Southeast

1810 South Lewis St.
Mesa, AZ 85210
FAX - 602.506.6570

Rita Flores	602.506.3935
Grace Nabor	602.506.3379

CASA Kudos

From the FCRB

The Foster Care Review Board commended the following CASAs for their continued dedication to the children on their cases:

- JoEllen Field
- Carol Thornton
- Tamala Rolland
- Mary Wallace
- Kaye McCarthy
- Fran Reich
- Mary Lou Davis

From the Court and staff

- Judge Ronan commended CASA Ken Pollock in open court “for the detail in the reports and his dedication to the child’s welfare.”
- Judge Franks commended CASA Karen Nelson for her detailed report.

From CPS

- Case manager, Charlotte Ervin, stated that CASA Barbara Evans is the “best CASA she has ever, ever known!”
- During FCRB, CASA Ray Prettyman was commended by the case manager, who stated that the family wouldn’t be where it is without him.

From a GAL

Susie Todd, GAL, commended CASAs Gilda Czerwinka, Mary Jeanne Fincher, Ginny Martin, Ray Prettyman, Marilyn Slade, and Karen Tyrell for the outstanding work they are all doing on their cases.

Peer Group Meetings

Scottsdale — 1:30 p.m.

Last Wednesday of each month
Home of Mary Lou Davis

East Valley — 6:30 p.m.

Third Wednesday of each month.
Home of Joe & Vicky Orlando

West Valley — 6:30 p.m.

Second Thursday of each month
Glendale Public Library
Host: Donna Spence

Call the CASA Office for addresses and phone numbers. We hope to find a new home for the the Central Phoenix peer group soon.

From an Interested Party

CASA Don Groth was commended by the counselor for his child at the FCRB for his involvement and support of his CASA child.

From LaDonna

- Lisa Nguyen for monthly office help. Lisa also helped prepare our Public Relations materials for Operation Saturation.
- Jackie Flowers for giving a CASA Presentation at 1st Congregational Church on Children’s Justice Sunday.
- Vicki Avina for staffing an information table at the Latino Institute.
- Amy Locklear, Barbara Karim, and Linda Carthen for staffing the information table at the Arizona Black Expo.
- Donald Gallagher for posting CASA information at his apartment complex.
- Leah Ruggieri for office help. Leah helped put some of those Operation Saturation packets together!
- Lou Baldwin for placing her OpSat Recruitment information at Paradise Valley Community College.
- Virginia Martin for placing CASA posters at her gym.
- Lou Jones for placing CASA information throughout the Glendale area.
- Nuna Dow for publishing CASA information in her realtor’s newsletter.
- Marilyn Slade for sending contact information for two of her local newspapers. CASA information will be sent to each newspaper for publication.

Welcome

The CASA program welcomes the following volunteers-in-training who completed September OT:

Kenneth Cook, Jane Rupard, Barbara Smith, Jean Tichenor, Carol Peterson, Mary Sage, Nicola Winkel, Thomas Hartley, Katherine Behr, Chris Mulleneaux, Patricia O’Connell, Mary Villegas, Donna Kramer, Brenda Jimmis, Kathy Hebel, Shari Gabaldon, Sheila Boschma, Patricia Elliot, Marie Lanzon, Christiane Robbins, Deb Dusseau